Decline in the number of wild animals

*271. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that population of wild animals is continuously declining since last few years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have initiated any concrete step in this regard; and

(d) whether Government are also proposing to amend the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, with a view to take stern steps?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) There are no reports of continuous decline in the population of wild animals. Fluctuations in the population of wild animals is a natural phenomenon.

(c) It had been the constant endeavour of the Central and State Governments to develop the habitat of the wild animals so that a viable population of wild animals is maintained. Apart from the implementation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, India is also a signatory to many International Conventions aiming at the conservation of wild animals. Financial and technical assistance for habitat improvement, strengthening of infrastructure, communication systems, census, research, eco development, etc. are also provided for the conservation of wildlife under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes, "Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries", "Project Tiger" and "Project Elephant".

(d) Yes, Sir. An amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in this regard is now under consideration of the Parliament.

Increase in the prices of medicines

†*272. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the increase in percentage, witnessed in the prices of medicines during the last three financial years;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether permission has been sought from Government for increasing the price of any of the medicines;

(c) if so, the names of such medicines alongwith the details of the permission granted for the price rise; and

(d) the details of medicines whose prices have either come down or have been reduced during the last three year?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) The 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed/revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95. These drugs have been kept under price control on the basis of criteria mentioned in 'Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986', announced in September, 1994.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc., The NPPA monitors the prices of medicines as per monthly Retail Audit Reports of ORG-IMS Research Pvt. Ltd. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

The details of number of packs whose prices have increased or decreased or remained stable on the monthly basis in percentage terms as per Retail Audit Reports of ORG-IMS Research Pvt. Ltd. for the last three financial years are as follows:

1. Percentage number of packs whose prices increased:

	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2003-04	1.92	1.27	1.60	2.05	1.47	1.55	1.17	1.57	0.97	2.43	1.39	2.05
2004-05	1.28	1.55	1.15	0.78	2.24	1.34	2.34	3.48	1.91	1.13	3.10	1.18
2005-06	3.08	2.73	2.60	3.16	27.25	27.20	8.74	3.10	1.14	1.36	1.17	1.76

2. Percentage number of packs whose prices decreased:

	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2003-04	1.17	1.01	1.13	1.06	0.88	1.13	1.09	0.95	0.65	1.70	0.75	0.84
2004-05 05	1.35	1.21	0.65	0.37	1.26	0.75	1.27	1.48	0.93	0.41	0.70	1.10
2005-06	1.54	0.80	0.78	0.78	21.59	23.63	9.06	3.81	0.96	0.42	0.97	0.60

3. Percentage number of packs whose prices remained stable:

	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2003-04	96.91	97.72	97.27	96.89	97.65	97.32	97.74	97.47	98.38	95.87	97.87	97.11
2004-05	97.38	97.24	98.20	98.85	96.50	97.90	96.39	95.03	97.16	98.47	96.20	97.73
2005-06	95.38	96.46	96.62	96.05	51.16	49.17	82.21	93.09	97.90	98.22	97.85	97.64

The percentage increase in wholesale price index over the preceding year for drugs and medicines *vis-a-vis* all commodities for the last three financial years is as follows:

Years	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Drugs and medicines	2.55	2.37	4.10*
All commodities	5.46	6.48	4.41*

*Provisional

The common reasons for rise in the prices of medicines are:—

(a) Rise in the price of bulk drugs

(b) Rise in the cost of production/import

(c) Rise in the cost of transport, freight rates;

(d) Rise in the cost of utilities like fuel, power, diesel etc.

(e) For imported medicines, rise in the c.i.f. price and depreciation of the Rupee

(f) Changes in taxes and duties

The details and names of the Scheduled formulations for which increase or decrease in prices was notified for the last three financial years are being compiled and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Hoarding of foodgrains by traders to create artificial scarcity

*273. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that huge quantity of foodgrains including pulses and sugar have been purchased by traders during the last three months and kept in their stores so as to create its artificial scarcity which has resulted in the abnormal rise in its prices;

(b) if so, the approximate quantity of foodgrains which has been purchased by them; and

(c) whether Government had conducted any raid in this connection and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Government is undertaking procurement of foodgrains under price support operations. Purchase and stocking of foodgrains is also undertaken by the private trade. However, precise information on the purchase and stocking of foodgrains, pulses and sugar by private trade is not maintained in this Ministry.

There has been no abnormal or unusual rise in prices during the last three months as shown in the changes in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) for these commodities:—

Whole Sale Price Index

Base Year 1993-94=100

	Date	Index (WPI)	Date	Index (WPI)	Variation
Rice	22/4/2006	175.1	22/07/2006	177.6	+2.5
Wheat	22/4/2006	195.5	22/07/2006	201.5	+6.0
Pulses	22/4/2006	236.0	22/07/2006	241.1	+5.1
Sugar	22/4/2006	173.7	22/07/2006	171.4	-2.3